

Applicants : Neil G. Cousins et al.
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REMARKS

Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 27-35 are allowed, and that claims 39 and 42 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Independent claim 36 was rejected under 37 C.F.R. §102(b) as being anticipated by Donnelly et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,491,956. The "Response to Arguments" portion of the Office Action dated May 18, 2006 states that "In response to applicant's argument that the references fail to show certain features of applicant's invention, it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., that *the first and second stretch rollers are rotated without moving the drive member*) are not recited in the rejected claim(s)." (Emphasis added). Applicants are uncertain why claim 36 was rejected, because claim 36 recites "the rotating output member rotates the first and second stretch rollers without moving the drive member". (See the last paragraph of claim 36). Thus, claim 36 does, in fact, recite these features, and Applicants are not in any way reading limitations from the specification into claim 36. Applicants respectfully assert that Donnelly et al. '956 does not include these features, and claim 36 cannot be anticipated by Donnelly et al. '956.

Applicants appreciate that the claims of the present application include some functional recitations. However, "A functional limitation must be evaluated and considered, just like any other limitation of the claim, for what it fairly conveys to a person of ordinary skill in the pertinent art in the context in which it is used." MPEP 2173.05(g). Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner consider the invention as a whole, including all functional limitations. See also MPEP 2141.02(I). ("The claimed invention as a whole must be considered").

In the event claim 36 is still found to be anticipated by Donnelly et al. '956, Applicants would be appreciative of a call from the Examiner concerning amendments to differentiate over Donnelly et al. '956 as suggested at page 5 of the Office Action.

Applicants have made a concerted effort to place the present application in condition for allowance, and a notice to this effect is earnestly solicited. In the event there are any

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remaining informalities, the courtesy of a telephone call to the undersigned attorney would be appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

Date

7/18/06


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